







THE  
VANITY  
OF  
HONOUR,  
WEALTH,  
AND  
PLEASURE.

AND WITH THE  
Indispensable Duty  
OF  
Amendment of Life.

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By J. Halsey

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*The Fashion of this world passeth  
away, 1 Cor. 7. 31.*

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L O N D O N,

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THE  
VANTY  
OF  
HONOR  
WEALTH  
AND  
PLEASURE

IMPRIMATUR,

Feb. 5.  
1677.

Gill. Fane.



~~The Dedication.~~  
~~Impress'd by I. Smith, Printer, at the Sign of the Gun, in St. Dunstons Church-yard, near St. Dunstons Church, in London.~~  
To the Right Wor-  
shipful Sir *William*  
*Boreman*, Knight, one  
of the Officers of his  
Majesties most An-  
cient and Honoura-  
ble Board of *Green-*  
*cloth.*

S I R,

**T** H E kind and Noble  
Entertainment you were  
pleased to afford to my  
last Address of this Nature,  
has incouraged me once more to

## The Dedication.

*implore your Patronage of these my ensuing Endeavours. And in truth, to whom can I more properly dedicate the following Harangue, than to him, who (amidst all the temptations of a Florid and Eminent Condition) retains an untainted Integrity, and preserves those Graces in their Genuine Purity, which both compleat and dignifie a Christian.*

*I am sufficiently sensible, that I expose my self to a great deal of Censure, in decrying those Idolized Objects which attract the affections of the generality of Mankind. And indeed, it cannot but excite the grief of every Religious*

## The Dedication.

*Religious Person, to observe, with what a passionate industry, the most part of them, who profess the Belief of Another Life, and pretend to expect an Everlastingness of Bliss when Time shall be no more, pursue impertinent Vanities, set up their Rest on this side Heaven, and for present and imaginary satisfactions, not only relinquish their Right to those Essential Joys which are to come, but render themselves obnoxious to the opposite extremities of endless wretchedness. And alas, What is a man profited (saith our Blessed Saviour, Mat. 16. 26.) if he shall gain the whole*

## The Dedication.

World, and lose his own Soul?  
*What will it advantage him to  
be supposedly happy for a mo-  
ment, and really miserable to  
all Eternity?*

*I N my Discourse upon A-  
mendment of Life, (a Manu-  
script whereof I formerly pre-  
sented to you) I have attempt-  
ed (though in faint and un-  
lively colours) to decipher the  
Amiable Perfections of Vertue,  
the Odious Deformities of Vice,  
and the Indispensable Necessity  
of a severe Repentance, if we  
hope to escape the Calamities of  
Damnation, and to be made  
partakers of Celestial Beati-  
tude.*

Sir,

## The Dedication.

Sir, Give me leave to tell  
the World, I have such grate-  
ful, such indeleble sentiments  
of those Favours I have recei-  
ved from you, that no length of  
Time shall be able to Cancel the  
remembrance of them. But per-  
chance some may alludge, that  
a Verbal Acknowledgment is  
no proportionable return for  
solid and actual Obligations.  
To which I answer, That as the  
Poor Widows Mite was a more  
acceptable Offering to the Dei-  
ty, than those profuse Oblations  
which the Rich Men threw into  
the Treasury; Because (as our  
Lord expresses it, Luke 21. 4.)  
She of her Penury did cast in  
all



## The Dedication.

all the living that she had, and  
they of their abundance. So a  
Sincere Recognition, especially  
where there wanted a larger  
Ability, has been always ac-  
counted (by Persons of your Ge-  
nerous Temper) a competent  
Retaliation for the most consi-  
derable Civilities.

I shall dismiss your Patience  
with an earnest Supplication to  
the Sovereign Being, that you  
may live long and prosperous-  
ly here upon Earth, and con-  
tinue (for many years yet to  
come) the Support and Orna-  
ment of your Family: That the  
Almighty may endow you with  
the choicest of his Temporal  
Mercies,



## The Dedication.

*Mercies, prevent you with the  
blessings of Goodness, Psal.  
21. 3. And, in that awful  
Morning of the Resurrection,  
when he shall make up his  
Jewels, Mal. 3. 17. and be  
glorified in his Saints, 2 Thes.  
1. 10. may he Crown his own  
Graces in you with an Enjoy-  
ment of Immortal Felicities.  
This is the daily Prayer of,*

**SIR,**

---

*Your ever-obedient Ne-  
phew, and most hum-  
ble Servant,*

**J. A. HALSEY.**

# The Dedication.

Mercies prevent you with the  
blessings of Goodness, Psal.  
124. 8. And, in that awful  
Morning of the Resurrection,  
~~when he shall make up his~~  
Jewels, Mat. 25. 17. and be  
glorified in his Kingdom, &c. These  
I to you be Crown his own

~~Page 7. line 19. for private read Pr-~~  
~~ivate. Page 8. line 7. for assu-~~  
~~late read assimilate.~~ Some few other  
Literal mistakes, and mispointings of  
the *Printer*, the courteous Reader is de-  
sired to rectify with his *Pen*.

~~Your ever obedient Ser-~~  
~~vant, and most humble~~  
ble Servant,

J. A. HALESEY.

HE (who was the Wildest of  
men, and the most Magnifi-

cent of Princes, who possessed  
 whatever might promote his de-

**Vanity of Honour.**

**WEALTH AND**

**PLEASURE.**

**T**HE Royal Preacher, af-  
 ter he had extracted the  
 Noblest and most Excel-  
 lent Endowments from  
 the Creatures, and exerted his ut-  
 most Efforts in the chase of that  
 Good, which (being acquired)  
 might terminate the desires of his  
 Immortal Soul, from all his elabo-  
 rate Inquiries, his speculative and  
 practical discoveries, deduces this  
 reproachful (but yet irrefragable)  
 conclusion; *Vanity of vanities, all*  
*is vanity, Eccl. 1.2*

Lord

B

H E

HE (who was the Wisest of  
meer men, and the most Magnifi-  
cent of Princes, who possessed  
whatever might promote his de-  
sign in the search of Felicity, **V**  
 libly assures us, that it is impossible  
 to attain **Solid Happiness** in the  
 fruition of **Secular Accommoda-**  
 ons; That there is an **Inherent In-**  
 sufficiency riveted into the very **Es-**  
 sence of **Sublunary Beings**, which  
 renders them **absolutely Incapable**  
 of **dispensing the least atom** of  
**substantial satisfaction**, and that  
 nothing but that ever-blessed **Pow-**  
 er, from whom it derives its **Exis-**  
 tence, can truly satiate the **insatiable**  
 mind of Man (which Good  
 still **HE** is implanted in us a  
**Principle** which naturally incites  
 us to the **Quest of Felicity**. But  
 alas! such is the blindness of our  
**wretched condition**, such the de-  
 pravation of our **inordinate affec-**  
 tions, that the generality of man-  
 kind

kind pursue it in a wrong way, and (instead of addressing themselves to that adorable Bliss, which can only afford them a permanent Contentation) court the Hand-maid for the Mistress, the Shadow for the Substance, and momentary Appearances for durable and refined Happiness.

SOME think to gain this invaluable Jewel in specious Titles, and splendid Dignities, as if a blast of popular air, or the fulsom breath of the inconstant multitude could invest them with any real worth, or make them a jot happier than they were before. Others hope to find it in Riches, and a plentiful Estate, as if Gold and Silver, sumptuous Palaces, pleasant Orchards, delicate Gardens, costly Moveables, and the like external Enjoyments, could supersede the storms of their guilty Consciences, and create a calm within. Others seek it in de-

lights and pleasures, as though sensual Entertainments (whereof the brute Animals participate in a larger measure than we) were proper Objects to gratifie our intellectual Faculties, and put a period to the longings of those immaterial parts of us. I shall therefore (by a compendious and rational Discourse) endeavour to prove, that Honour, Wealth and Pleasure are not the Sovereign Good of Man; that neither any, nor all of these can be our ultimate end, and consequently are so far from rendring us happy, that they commonly become the principal Causes and Authors of our misery.

I shall begin with *Honour* (that glittering Idol which the ambitious man consecrates for his Deity, and worships with a passionate adoration) Alas! what is it (if impartially defined), but a gilded Vapour, a fugacious Chymera, a gaudy

dy Phantasm in which there is no solidity, and (in the most favourable construction) a counterfeit and imaginary Felicity? I must confess it appears amiable at a distance, seems gay and glorious afar off, but at a nearer view the weakest eye has strength enough to discover its imposture, and perceive that *it is altogether Vanity*, Psal. 39. 6. The smallest Cloud obscures its brightness, the least stain blemishes its beauty, and the slightest pressure crushes the bubble into flatness and nothing. Good God! if we behold a man arrayed with gorgeous Apparel, attended by a pompous Retinue, and waited on by crouds of Servitors, how are we taken with the Spectacle, and how inclinable to repine at his supposed Happiness? when all this State is but meer Pageantry and Ostentation, and were it possible for us to pry into the breast of that person



whose fortune we admire, we should probably find his Conscience extended upon the Rack, and the Wretch in torments, even in the height of his outward bravery. It is a notorious folly to judge of Felicity by superficial appearances, especially when we may be so easily, and are so frequently mistaken. O the deceiveableness and delusion of whatever the World accounts magnificent and glorious! Upon what instable Foundations is reard the superstructure of transitory Promotion! which is not only exposed to the violent assaults of Envy, but is also obnoxious to an infinity of accidents, the most trivial of which is able to compleat its destruction. But admit that it may withstand the united strength of so many implacable Enemies that endeavour its ruine, yet the Hand of Fate will inevitably overturn the tottering Fabrick, and level it with the  
the



the ground. Alas! where is that  
mighty *Alexander* of whom Hi-  
story reports, that when the Philo-  
sopher *Anaxarchus* alledged there  
was a plurality of Worlds, he wept  
because he had not as yet conquer'd  
one? Where is the gallant *Julius*  
*Cæsar*, whose ambition could be  
circumscribed by no less a limit  
than the huge extension of the Ro-  
man Empire? Where is *Agagilans*,  
*Antiochus*, *Themistocles*, *Epaminon-  
das*, *Pompey*, *Scipio*, *Hannibal*, *Tra-  
jan*, *Dioclesian*, and the rest of those  
fleshly Worthies, the Fame of  
whose Illustrious Victories replen-  
ished the Earth with wonder and  
astonishment? could all their re-  
celebrated Armies rescue them from  
the stroke of Destiny? Did not  
these Gods die like Men, Psal. 82.  
7. and their Pomp determine in a  
neglected Grave? Are not their  
once flourishing Laurels withered  
by Time, and embellish the Tri-

umph of the King of Terrors?  
 And could we open a Vist into  
 the Infernal Kingdom, we should  
 presently perceive that the remem-  
 brance of those Grandeurs they  
 possessed here, does exhibit no  
 comfort to them in that place of  
 torment, ~~what art thou the better,~~  
 O Aristotle (said St Jerom) to be  
 commended where thou art not, and  
 tortured where thou art? Tigranes  
 King of Armenia (upon the day of  
 his Coronation) took the Regal  
 Diadem in his hand, and looking  
 a good while attentively upon it,  
 at length he disclosed his thoughts  
 in these patheticall exprellions;  
 Thou Noble rather than happy Or-  
 nament! did men consider what  
 Thorns are intermixed with thy  
 Jewels, and reflect upon those cares  
 and anxieties which are thy indis-  
 pensable Concomitants, if they saw  
 thee lying beneath their feet, they  
 would not so much as stoop to rake  
 thee

*thee up.* And alas! how many men have been overwhelmed by the irresistible torrent of their own greatness, and have sunk under the burden of an insupportable prosperity? How many have (at the beginning) acted their parts upon the Theatre of Honour with Credit and Applause, and yet (before the conclusion of the Scene) have gone off with disgrace and infamy? We have memorable instances of this assertion both in sacred and profane story.

**ARSA LOM** (the unnatural Son of an indulgent Parent) was at first the Joy and Delight of *Israel*; but when he commenced an actual Rebellion against his own Father, aimed at his Life, and would have bereaved him of his Empire, the Vengeance of Divine Justice cut him off (even in the Flower of his Age) by a merited and exemplary punishment.

**HAMAN** the *Agagite* (by the favour of his Royal Master) was raised to an Eminency above all the Princes of the Kingdom, and adored by the Grandees of the *Persian* Court; and yet (by a sudden revolution of Providence) he was consigned to that Gibbet which he had erected for *Mordecai*.

**MARCUS CRASSUS**, a *Roman* Consul (not contented with that Estimation which he already enjoyed by the acquist of several signal Victories, but inflamed with a desire of greater Conquests) undertook an Expedition against the *Parthians*, in which unfortunate War his whole Army was discomfited, and he mercitelly slain.

**POLYCRATES** Tyrant of *Samos* (for his extraordinary prosperity) was termed the *Darling of Fortune*. And indeed I cannot but wonder at one admirable success that befel him, for having thrown

an

an Emerald of inestimable value  
 in the Sea (in hope that the loss  
 of so considerable a Gem might  
 be some allay to his Happiness) the  
 very next day he found it again in  
 (the belly of a Fish which was ser-  
 ved up to his Table. But this Hal-  
 reon's Calm did at last expire, in a  
 fatal Storm, for in the short while  
 after he was betrayed (by his Ene-  
 mies) into the hands of Orontes  
 the Persian General, and (by the  
 positive Command of Darius) was  
 Crucified on the top of a Hill, and  
 there (as a Mirrour) of the incoer-  
 tainty of Humane Felicity) igno-  
 miniously ended his life.

PEPPE NEIS (from the low  
 Estate of a Potters Son) arrived to  
 the highest preferments in Alexan-  
 der's Army, after whose decease  
 he maintained his Station (with in-  
 credible valour) against the most  
 vigorous attempts of his powerful  
 Adversaries: But (in process of  
 time)

time) he was overcome by *Ashting*  
*Shah* King of *Asack* *denja*, and brought  
 to so deplorable an exigent, that  
 he perished for want of food. *ed*  
*in* **BUT** *James* **THE** *Emperour* of  
 the *Turks*, did (for divers years)  
 gloriously sway the *Ottoman* Scep-  
 ter, but (in a dreadful Encounter  
 between his Forces and those of the  
 Great *Tambeck* *lane*) he was utterly  
 overthrown, and (being taken  
 Captive) was put into an Iron-  
 Cage, and carried about in Tri-  
 umph by the Victorious *Turks*.  
 And in fine, (unable to sustain the  
 shock of his impetuous misfor-  
 tunes, and enraged to behold his  
 beloved Wife waiting in a shame-  
 ful posture) at the Table of his  
 Conqueror) he beat out his brains  
 against the Grates of his Prison,  
 and miserably died. *bonification of*

**BUT** that which should pri-  
 cipally deter us from the affectation  
 of worldly praises is, that God has  
 declared himself to be the ambi-

ious mans irreconcilable Enemy,  
and has solemnly threatened that  
they (who in pursuit of a vain Re-  
putation) derogate from his Glory,  
and attribute to themselves that  
which properly appertains to him,  
shall not escape with impunity.  
And alas! *what have we* (says S.  
Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 7.) *that we did not*  
*receive?* there is nothing which  
we can lawfully call our own, but  
(our sins) they indeed are our  
works, and the spurious Offspring  
of the Brute within us: but our  
Life, Health, Knowledge, Wisdom,  
Strength, Beauty, Virtue, and the  
other blessings we enjoy, are purely  
the largesses of the Divine Bounty,  
and have their Emanation from  
that Father of Lights, from whom  
(as the Apostle intimates, *1 Tim. I.*  
*17.*) *cometh every good and perfect*  
*gift*; whose unlimited mercy did  
not only make us what we are,  
but endued us with what we  
pos-



possess, and without whose Providential Protection we were not able to subsist one minute of an hour, but should immediately shrink into ruine and destruction. When the *Devil* *demonstrating* being demanded what God did in Heaven, gave this reply, *He humbles the Proud, and exalts the Lowly.* And it is observable in Holy Writ, that the Almighty (who protests by the mouth of the Prophet, (*Isa. 42. 8.*) *that he will not give his glory to another*) has always rigorously punished those audacious Intruders which have incroached upon his Prerogative in that particular.

*Lucifer* the Prince of the Morning, and the most excellent of created Spirits (for aspiring to an Equality with the Most High) was dethroned of all his immunities, tumbled headlong out of Heaven; and (together with the rest of the *Rebelling Confederates*) plunged into the



the unfathomable Abyſſes of Eter-  
nal Fire.

**A D A M** (for his inordinate  
curioſity and deſire of knowledge)  
forfeited *Paradiſe*, and ſubjected  
himſelf and his Poſterity to an ex-  
tremity of wretchedneſs.

**C O R A H**, **Dathan**, and **Abi-  
ram**, (for diſobeying the Com-  
mandment of the Lord, and ſtri-  
king at his Authority in the Perſon  
of *Moſes*) were ſwallowed up alive  
by the Earth, which (in preſence  
of all the Congregation of *Iſrael*)  
opened her mouth, and inſtantly  
devoured theſe ſeditious Conſpira-  
tors.

**N E B U C H A D N E Z Z A R**,  
the Potent Monarch of *Aſſyria* (for  
his intolerable pride, and exorbi-  
tant opinion of his Puſſance and  
Majeſty) was deprived (at once)  
of his Reaſon and Kingdom, and  
(as unfit for the ſociety of men) be-  
came a Companion of the *Beaſts*  
that periſh.

*H E-*

101 **HEROD AGRIPPA** (upon a Festival day) ascended his Royal Throne; and made an Oration to the people, who (charmed by his Eloquence) gave a shout, saying, *It is the voice of a God, and not of a Man*, Act. 12. 22. But because he consented to those immerited praises, and return'd not the Honour to his Maker, he was immediately smitten by the Angel of the Lord, and eaten of Worms: And in the very agony of death that unfortunate Prince breathed out this mournful Exclamation; *Behold how he expires under the pressure of insufferable torments, whom but even now ye mis-called a God.* E. V.

102 **BUT** that we may not have the least colour of pretence to justify our compliance with this extravagant passion of Van-glory, let us set before our eyes, and transcribe (for our imitation) the incomparable Example of our blessed

Re-

Redeemer, who was in nothing more illustrious than in the vertue of Humility. And indeed it was that which exalted him to a sublimity infinitely above all *Principalties* and *Powers*, and inflated him at the right hand of his adorable Father. He (to convince us of the inconsiderableness of temporal Preferments, and to demonstrate how insignificant they were in order to the accomplishment of our Salvation) was pleased to condescend to so abject an abasement, as to be born in a Stable, and lye in a Manger, to serve an Apprenticeship to an ignoble Occupation, and labour for a subsistence with the sweat of his Brows, to live in a state of poverty, and struggle with those inconveniencies which are the inseparable adjuncts of a necessitous condition. And in short, did vouchsafe to be reduced to such an unparalleled destitution, that he himself

gener

self gave this Answer to a certain  
 Scribe, who proffer'd to accompany  
 him whithersoever he went, *The*  
*Foxes have holes, and the Birds of*  
*the air have nests, but the Son of*  
*Man hath not where to lay his head,*  
 Mat. 8. 20. And in several places  
 of his holy Gospel he acquaints us,  
 that his Kingdom is not of this  
 world, that they who will be his  
 Disciples, must abandon Father,  
 Mother, Wife, Children, and their  
 most endeared Relatives and Con-  
 cernments (when in competition  
 with his service) *and follow him.* That we must  
 fight and conquer here, but expect  
 our Crowns hereafter, and (by a  
 contempt of secular Greatnesses)  
 must obtain our Glorious Celestial  
 and never-fading Glories.  
 AND indeed it is his Religion  
 which can only give us Immorta-  
 lity, and teach us the way to Es-  
 sentiall Happiness. And though the  
 genera-

generality of men (seduced by their licentious affections) esteem her a severe Mistress, and avoid her as a Tyranness, that would lay a restraint upon the inclinations of Nature, and affright them from their beloved sensualities, though that gilded nothing (which the World calls *Honour*) be refused to her, and is commonly made a Prostitute to the most execrable (so they be but successful) Villanies: Yet the time will come when there shall be ~~a reward for blameless souls~~, *Wisd.* 3. 23. when the sincere and repentant Christian (in compensation of his humility and self-denial) shall be invested with irrepealable Honours, and inherit Dignities as lasting as they are glorious. When those glittering shows of felicity (which captivate the eyes of the Proud and the Ambitious) will be pronounced (by Truth it self) to be meer Vanity, and ~~shall be~~ so far from promoting

moting their welfare, that they will  
 enhance their damnation. Then  
 those miserable Wretches (sensible  
 too late of their folly) shall lament  
 and say (in the words of the Wise-  
 Man, Wisd. 5.) *what hath our pride,*  
*or what hath the glory of our riches*  
*profited us? they are all now vanish-*  
*ed like a shadow, we have wearied*  
*out our selves in the way of iniquity*  
*and perdition, but the way of the*  
*Lord we have not known. And a-*  
*gain, These are they* (speaking of  
 the righteous) *whom we had some-*  
*times in derision, and a Proverb of*  
*reproach. we fools accounted their*  
*life madness, and their end disho-*  
*nourable; but now they are num-*  
*bered among the Children of God, and*  
*their portion is among the Saints.*  
 And thus much (I presume) may  
 be sufficient for proof of the first  
 Proposition, Viz. *The Vanity of*  
*Honour.*

I shall proceed to Riches, the se-  
 cond

cond Subject to be handled in the prosecution of this Discourse. And alas! when I consider that the ineffable Wisdom and Goodness of God (in the great work of our Creation) intended us for so Noble an end, as to serve him a while here, and to Reign with him for ever hereafter; and (in order to that contrivement) was pleased to indue us with the Angelical Faculty of Understanding, to adorn us with a Majestick countenance, and erected towards the Heavens, that (surveying those beautiful habitations) we might remember our Divine Original, reflect upon that Immenfity of Bliss which awaits us in our Everlasting Country, and consequently do nothing that should mis-become the dignity of our Nature. And yet that multitudes of men should deviate so far from the grand design of their coming into the World, as to pursue  
their



their Felicity in the possession of a Creature immeasurably inferiour to themselves; and to idolize that *Mammon of Unrighteousness* (as our Saviour styles it, *Luke 16. 9.*) which is but a better sort of Dirt varnished by the Sun-beams, and receives its value meerly from Opinion; I cannot but stand amaz'd at the frenzy of those Wretches, who (more foolish than the *Americans* that barter Pearls for Glass) commute happiness for misery, and abandon all their pretensions to an *eternal weight of glory*, *2 Cor. 4. 17.* for the momentary enjoyment of that perishable Drofs, which every rational man must necessarily acknowledge to be *vanity and vexation of spirit.*

**G O O D** Lord! can we think it possible to reap any genuine satisfaction from the fruition of those sublunary Treasures, which the Heathen Philosophers (in regard of  
 their



their inconstancy, and the inequality of their distribution) termed the Goods of Fortunes. And then most learned of the Apostles (for the same reason) gives them the Name of *uncertain riches*, 1 Tim. 6. 7. And does not Experience evidently demonstrate, that they are liable to infinite casualties, and have their Possessors (notwithstanding all their plausible pretences) to unimagined and inconvenient, and excruciating troubles, with intolerable anxieties, which (like Thorns in their breasts) perpetually torment them, and render them unhappy in the midst of abundance.

THE B. Royall Ecclesiastick (declining against temporary Riches) argues in this manner, *well thou seest him upon that which is worth Pro. 23. 5.* And indeed there is no credit to be exhibited to their promises, nor assurance of their fidelity to be derived from their most declaring

dearing Complacencies; for they  
 are of so transient and volatile  
 nature, that (in the very height  
 of their Careſſes; and when we  
 conceive we have the greateſt cer-  
 tainty of their continuance) they  
 may make themselves wings, and fly  
 away from us. And alas, how ma-  
 ny (even from the top of a splen-  
 did and affluent condition) have  
 ſunk to ſo low a degree of Pover-  
 ty, that they became Objects of Ri-  
 ty, and were neceſſitated to ſup-  
 plicate for alms from door to  
 door. The ſame Sun beheld Job,  
 the Richeſt and the Pooreſt Man  
 of the Eaſt; and they that to day  
 lie upon Beds of Ivory, and ſtretch  
 themſelves upon their Couches, that  
 eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and  
 the Calves out of the miſt of the  
 Stall; that chaunt to the ſound of  
 the Viols, drink wine in Bowls, and  
 anoint themſelves with the choi-  
 ceſt Oyments; Amos 6: 4, 5, 6 may  
 be ſaid to

to morrow be reduced to such a prodigious destitution, as to *embrace the dunghill*, Lam. 4. 5. and languish for lack of bread. It is an inexcusable act of indiscretion, to confide in those things which will undoubtedly deceive us, and to build the superstructure of our felicity upon a Foundation that is bottomed on the Sand.

**BUT** for a greater illustration of the verity of this Position, let us examine the occurrences of former Ages, and History will afford us irrefragable examples of the Vanity of Riches, and fully convince us that they have been so far from being able to rescue their Owners from any of those usual Calamities which are incident to Mankind in general, and (as a punishment of the first sin of *Adam*) were intailed upon his wretched Posterity, that they have exposed them to the Attaques of several extraordinary disasters,

asters, which (we may lawfully believe) would never have approached their Dwellings, had not the Eminency of their Station, and the multitude of their Possessions, invited them to an Invasion. The common shrubs of the Forrest (as beneath the notice of Envy) enjoy an undisturbed tranquillity, whereas the lofty Cedars (though their branches reach unto the Clouds, and aspire to a vicinity with the Stars) are always obnoxious to Storms and Tempests, and oftentimes (by a vain contention with those Winds which are superiour to them in strength) expedite their own destruction.

**ZED EK IAH**, King of *Ju-  
dah*, did (for some years) flourish in Riches and Honour, and was revered by most of the bordering Nations. But when he withheld the Tribute which he had engaged to pay to the King of the *Chalde-*

*ans,*

and, that redoubtable Warriour, (exasperated by his detestable ingratitude, and the notorious Violation of that League which had been solemnly concluded between them) invaded his Country, and besieged him in *Jerusalem* with a formidable Army; and in short, drove him to such an extremity, that he fled privily out of the City, but being immediately pursued and overtaken upon the Plains of *Jericho*, he was conveyed to *Nebuchadnezzar*, who commanded his Nobles and Children to be massacred before his face, his eyes to be torn out of his head, and then sent him (in Fetters) a Prisoner to *Babylon*, where he sustained unspeakable miseries, and ended his days in a deplorable Captivity.

*CRÆSUS* King of *Lydia*, was certainly the most Opulent Prince of his time; and yet *Solon* acquainted him, that *Tellus* the *A-*

*thenian* was a happier man than he: and indeed the Event proved that Famous Law-giver to be a true Prophet in that particular, for whereas the one lived securely under the Covert of a mean condition, and was contented with his allotted Portion, the vast Revenues of the other incouraged him to commence a War against *Cyrus*, Monarch of the *Persians*, by whom he was intirely defeated, and dispossessed both of his Wealth and Kingdom.

*ANTIOCHUS* (surnamed the Great) had subjected to his Dominion the better part of *Asia*, and having amassed an inestimable Treasure, he became so excessively proud, that he resolved to try his Fortune against the *Romans*: But after several Rancounters between them (wherein it was his ill luck to be always overcome) he was enforced to surrender the noblest of his Provinces

Provinces into the hands of the Victors, and to submit to a dishonourable Peace, and (being confined by an Edict of the Senate to a small Territory beyond the Mountain *Taurus*) he expended the remainder of his life in an inglorious obscurity.

**BELISARUS**, General of *Justinians* Army, was a Person of that marvellous Valour and Conduct, and so wonderfully successful, that he was never discomfited in Battle; who (after he had chased the *Goths* out of *Italy*, vanquished the numerous Forces of the King of *Parthia*, and signalized himself by a thousand other admirable actions) returned to *Constantinople* laden with Laurels, and the spoils of the Conquered: But in process of time (by the treachery of his adulterous Wife) he incurred the Emperours implacable displeasure, who caused his eyes to



be cruelly bored out, and deprived him of his Estate and Dignity, and that brave Man (whose Sword had performed so many Miracles for the preservation of the Empire) was brought to such a miserable exigency as to beg in the publick streets, and to crave an Alms from them he met, in these lamentable expressions; *Good people! commiserate my condition, and bestow a half-penny upon blind Belisarius.*

*CALUPHA*, King of Persia, had extorted from his Subjects such a prodigious deal of Wealth; that he filled a Tower with Gold, Diamonds, and Jewels of an incredible value: But maintaining a War against *Allan* King of the *Tartarians*, he was so faintly defended by his own Souldiers (who abhorred him for his insatiable covetousness, and because he had unjustly detained their pay from them) that he was taken Prisoner by his Enemy, and

and condemned to be starved to death, in that very place which he erected for the security of his beloved treasures.

I might alledge infinite Examples of this nature, but these may suffice to convince every ingenious Reader of the vanity of those trifles, which we miscall by the name of Riches, and to demonstrate what broken Reeds they have proved to them, who have been so inconsiderate as to relye and depend upon them.

MEN of Experience do prize a Horse never the more for his embroidered Saddle, sumptuous Caparisons, and Harnels garnished with Gold, but for his good qualities, strength of body, and ability for service; and is it not an unreasonable partiality to esteem a man according to his riches, and to reverence him for those external Appendages that are no part of himself?

self? which (instead of rendering him better) make him commonly more vicious than he was before, and will be utterly unable to help him when he shall have most occasion for their assistance; I mean in the hour of death, and at the Day of Judgment?

F O R let it be supposed, that it were possible for any person to possess the Wealth of the whole Universe, and to ingross whatsoever is precious and valuable under the Sun: Alas! that stupendious mass of treasure would be too poor a price to purchase a Reprieve from the King of Terrors, or to prolong his days the smallest part of a moment beyond their appointed limitations; but (at the prefixed time) he should infallibly bid adieu to all those delusive and unprofitable accommodations, which composed the Scene of his phantastick felicity, and descend to the melancholy

choly abodes of his deceased Progenitors. This the Kingly Prophet elegantly insinuates in this Emphatical Interrogation, *what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? and shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the Grave?* Psal. 89. 47. And again, *Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich; or if the glory of his house be increased. For he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth; neither shall his Pomp follow him,* Psal. 49. 16, 17. And in a few Months, after the Attourners have gone about the streets, Eccl. 12. 5. and the solemnity of his Funeral is determined, he shall be as absolutely forgotten, as if he had never been. And though a discrimination of Persons be unavoidably requisite to the preservation of mankind from disorder and confusion; yet at the general Audis all those superficial formalities, which (in respect

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of

of policy,) distinguish man from man, will be totally abolished; and the Rich, and the Poor, the Honourable, and the Base, the adorable Monarch, and the despicable Beggar, must stand upon an equal Basis, and shall be judged according to their works, Rev. 20. 13.. Then one charitable action (performed in obedience to Divine Command) will be more conducive to the confirmation of our eternal welfare than the value of innumerable Worlds, and not so much as a Cup of cold water administered to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, but shall be requited with a fraction of refined and inexpressible joys.

THE N the avaricious Worldling who placed his confidence in the multitude of his riches, Psal. 49. 6. devised his shining heaps, and was of so obdurate a nature, as he beheld his distressed Neighbour perishing

rishing for hunger, without the least  
 bowels of commiseration) shall ac-  
 knowledge too late, and be asha-  
 med of his folly, in admiring what  
 he ought to have contemned, and  
 in hoarding up that corruptible  
 Clay which will no way advan-  
 tage him in the formidable day of  
 Vengeance; but *the rust thereof*  
 (as the Apostle expresses it, Jam.  
 5. 3.) *shall be a witness against him,*  
 and ascertain his insupportable  
 condemnation. And therefore it is  
 not only the duty, but the interest  
 of those who abound in the good  
 things of this life, to dispence of  
 their store to the supply of the  
 Needy, to succour the Orphan  
 and the Widow, to extend a sea-  
 sonable relief to them that are o-  
 vermastered by their necessities, and  
 ready to expire for want of suste-  
 nance; and, in a word, *to make*  
*themselves friends of the Mammon*  
*of unrighteousness, that when they*  
*fail,*

*fail, they may receive them into everlasting habitations, Luke 16. 9.*

WE have notable Presidents of the disvaluation of Riches among the Ancient Heathens, of which (for the shame of many that pretend to be worshippers of the true God, but live a direct contradiction to their Profession, and make an Idol of their Money) I shall instance a few, and so draw towards the conclusion of this second particular.

ALEXANDER the Great having sent to Phocian a Present of a hundred Talents (which amounts in our Coin to above fifteen thousand pounds) he demanded of the Messengers, *wherefore their Master took more notice of him than of the rest of the Athenians?* To which they replied, *Because he thought you to be an honest and worthy man.* If that be the reason (said he) I beseech you to carry back the Gold, and let



let him permit me to be so indeed. Intimating thereby, that it was almost impossible for a man to retain his Vertue and Riches together.

**DIOGENES** preferred the inconveniences of his Tub before all the Magnificence of the *Macedonian* Court; of whom it is reported, that when the afore-mentioned *Alexander* gave him a Visit, and (perceiving him to be in want) bid him ask what he would, and it should be granted him. The generous *Cynick* despised his offer, and said, which of us two may be justly deemed the most indigent, either I that desire nothing but my pile of wood, and a little Meale and water; or thou who dost expose thy self to such eminent dangers for the enlarging of thy Kingdom, insomuch that the whole world seems too narrow to confine thy Covetousness; and limit thy Ambition? With which expression the Monarch was so extremely

extremely pleased, that (admiring the magnanimity of the Man) he brake out into this Exclamation, *If I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes.*

*ALCIBIADES* boasting of his ample Possessions in the presence of *Socrates*, that wise *Athenian* (to convince him handsomely of his folly) shewed him a Map of the World, and desired that he would inform him which were his Lands in the Province of *Attica*? Whereunto when *Alcibiades* answered, that they were not described there, *Ast thou not then ashamed* (said the Philosopher) *to brag of that thing which does not appear to be any part of the Earth?*

*MARCUS CURIUS* (a Roman General, and one who had thrice arrived to the Dignity of Triumph, for those important Victories by him obtained in the Honour of his Country) did so much  
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disregard secular Treasures, that his whole Estate consisted but in a little Farm which lay a few furlongs distant from *Rome*, where he employed all the time he could possibly sequester from the Concerns of the Publick, living upon such Roots and Herbs as his Garden afforded him, and when certain Embassadors of the *Sannites* came to pay their respects to him, they found him in his Chimney-corner dressing of Radishes for his Supper, and proffering him (in the Name of their Commonalty) a huge sum of Money, upon condition he would befriend them to the Senate, and make use of his interest to put a period to that War which had long continued between them. He gallantly refused their Proposition, and return'd them this Herbicke Answer, *They that can be satisfied with my Diet have no need of riches, and I account it far more glorious to live*

*and them that have wealth, who  
to enjoy it only self.*

**ZENO**, Founder of the Stoical Academy, was bred up in the Occupation of a Merchant. But (after he had lost a considerable Estate by Shipwrack, and of all the Goods which he formerly possessed, had only left a thred-bare garment to cover his nakedness) he was so far from repining at the unkindness of his Fortune, that he submitted to it with an incomparable Fortitude, and (renouncing his former Vocation) addicted himself to the study of Philosophy, wherein he cheerfully expended the remaining part of his life; and writ several excellent Précepts of Morality, which have rendred him famous to succeeding Generations.

**BUT** that which above all should convince us of the Vanity of Riches, is, that the Holy Jesus (when he came down from Heaven

to perform the Wonder of our Restauration) rejected them as inconsistent with, or (at least) repugnant to that Evangelical Vertue of Self-denial which he came to preach to the World; & thought it more convenient to appear in a low condition, and to ennoble Poverty, by making it his inseparable Companion in the whole course of his Earthly Peregrination. And indeed, after he had publicly declared himself to be the promised *Messiah*, he lived in such a state of indigence, that he was maintained (as may probably be surmized) by the charity of some of his Followers that were converted by him. He passionately admonished his Disciples of the danger and *deceitfulness of Riches*, Mar. 4. 19. and positively assured them, that the temptations which attended an exuberant Fortune were so many, and so powerful, that (without a Mira-  
cle

cle of Mercy) it was easier for a Camel to go thorow the eye of a Needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God, Mat. 19. 24. And again, he bespake his Auditors in this manner; Lay not up for your selves treasures upon earth, where Moth and Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break thorow and steal: But lay up for your selves treasures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break thorow, and steal, Mat. 6. 19, 20. And (that he might the more effectually perswade those, whom the bounty of Divine Providence had endowed with a plentiful Revenue, to acts of Beneficence and Compassion) he gave them intimation, that at the Day of Judgment every numerical person must render an account of his Stewardship, and shall be rewarded with everlasting happiness or misery, according to his fidelity  
or

or unfaithfulness in the execution of that Imploy: That they (who manage their trust to the Honour of their Master, the relief of their necessitous Brethren, and the benefit of their Generation) shall *enter into the joy of their Lord*, Mat. 25.

23. But those unprofitable servants (which hid their Talents in a Napkin, or squander them away in Gluttony and Drunkenness, in excess of Riot, or the like unwarrantable extravagancies, contrary to the intention of the Donor) shall be consigned to an irrevocable state of wretchedness, and inhabit *that outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*, Mat.

25. 30. (viz. Christian Policy) AND now I come to the last particular of my discourse, viz. the vanity of those carnal satisfactions which are so fondly admired by the licentious Epicure, and adored as his Supreme felicity. And indeed

it



it is lamentable to consider, how many Persons have retained an untainted Innocence amidst all the temptations of Wealth and Greatness, and yet have been insensibly depraved by the more subtil insinuations of Luxury and Voluptuousness: For there is ingrafted into our breasts so forcible a proclivity to pleasure, that whatsoever Object has Charm enough to flatter our Senses is but too apt to inveigle our affections. And alas! such is the predomination of our vitiated Appetites, that a great part of men instead of Courting those allowable delights which result from the use of right Reason, and the exercise of Christian Piety, frantically pursue the most inordinate sensuality, and (by wallowing in the mire of gross and fleshly pleasures) so deplorably unman themselves, that they become more brutish than the beasts that perish; Psal. 49.

20. For Experience acquaints us, that they inevitably observe those measures prescribed them by the grand Law of their Creation: They never eat but to mitigate their hunger, nor drink but to assuage their thirst; neither do they couple, but at such times as best conduce to the Procreation of their kind. But the dissolute man levels all the inclosures of Temperance and sobriety, tortures Nature to gratifie his artificial necessities, and submits himself to so ignominious a slavery, as to perform all the servile drudgeries imposed upon him by those imperious passions, which are more insatiable than the Grave, and (as the wise King words it, *Pro. 30. 15.*) *never say it is enough.* The fulfilling of one lust, does but make way for the cravings of another; and so intolerable is the tyranny of these infernal Task-masters, that the wretch sustains

sustains the torments of a real Hell, even in the midst of his imaginary Heaven.

THE very Heathens (though they saw but with the dim Opticks of Nature) made so large a discovery of the perniciousness of vain and corporal delights, that most of their Philosophers have unanimously decried them in their writings; and *Epicurus* was reputed a Monster, and branded to Posterity, for maintaining an Opinion, that Pleasure was the Sovereign good of man.

IT is recorded of *Socrates*, that (when he was to declaim against sensual Pleasures, and especially that of Incontinence) he covered his face with his garment; inferring thereby, that men should not only be ashamed to act, but to utter such things as have any tincture of obscenity. *Pleasure* (says the Divine *Plato*) *extinguishes the*  
light

light of the Soul, and deprives it of the benefit of good counsel; she misleads men (by her allurements) from the path of Virtue, and throws them head-long into the Abyss of Confusion. He that is devoted to Pleasure (saith the most Eloquent of Roman Orators) judgeth of things, not according to the Rule of Reason, but of Sense; esteems that best which most delights him, and easily permits himself to be inflamed by the burning fire of Luxuriousness. Sophocles calls Voluptuousness, a cruel Beast which enslaves her Proselytes, and shackles them with Chains of Adamant. And Epictetus (among the rest of his Moral discourses) has this memorable saying, when thy Spirit is enticed by the blandishments of Pleasure, take heed that thou fall not from a Precipice; meditate a while, and consider diligently, that after thou hast consented to her unreasonable suggestions, there remains

*remains nothing but repentance, and a hatred of thy self; whereas the vertue of Abstinence replenishes thy heart with a steadfast and assured joy, and exempts it from the invasions of sorrow and anxiety.*

WE may properly assimilate the delights of this World (to those Apples that grow upon the banks of the Lake Asphaltites, which (as Travellers report) are embellished with a lovely Vermilion-colour, and appear beautiful to the eye; but when they touch them with their hands, they immediately crumble into soot and ashes. I must confess, Pleasures pretend to afford us Mountains of (I know not what) felicities, and make us believe, that abundance of contentment may be extracted from their fruition: But when we come to reap the Harvest of their promises, they fallaciously disappoint our expectations, and delude us with Shadows and Images

ges of Happiness. All their sweets have a relish of bitterness, they disgust us in that Article of Time wherein they seem to please us, expire (after a transient and phantastical refreshment) in loathing and satiety, and leave behind them an unfavoury and distastful remembrance. It was the Contemplation of this Verity which induced the Learned *Aristotle* to advise his Disciples, That they should not so much remark Pleasure when they receive her first Addresses, as when she goes away from them; for then they may discover her odious deformity, and discern the venomous Sting which she carries in her Tail. And it was excellently spoken by another Philosopher, That when Luxury and Wantonness cover the Table, most commonly Sickness or Death (unwelcomly) bring in the Volder, and take away.

AND indeed these are those

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*Syrens*

*Sirens*, which (with the Musick of their Voices) inchant so many millions of men in their Voyage to Eternity, and allure them into the Gulf of Destruction. These are those treacherous Curtizans that imploy a thousand Stratagems to insnare us, that strangle us in their imbraces, and smile us into Ruine. In fine, these are those Politick Enemies which (under the pretence of friendship) foment a Civil War in our own bosoms, degrade Reason (that Imperial Faculty of the Soul) from her lawful Sovereignty over the inferiour passions, and instate the Beast (I mean our brutal Appetites) in the Throne. They abuse the Understanding, pervert the Will, and corrupt the Affections. They Effeminate the minds of their Votaries, and render them incapable of generous and Heroick Atchievements: They impair the health of their bodies, make them



a Prey to cruel and inflexible Diseases, (which oftentimes cut them off in the flourishing Spring of their years, and tumble them into an untimely and dishonourable Grave.

**I**T is impossible to enumerate those remarkable Judgments which have been introduced into the World by the guilt of irregular and interdicted Pleasures. The Libidinous Gluttony of our first Parents in eating the forbidden Fruit, was the Origination of all our Temporal Calamities, and (if our adored Saviour had not atoned the Justice of the Deity by the ineffable Merit of his Crucifixion) would have consigned us to an irremediable and Everlasting Damnation.

**T**HE Generations immediately preceding the Flood, were eating and drinking (marrying and giving in marriage, Mat. 24. 38. and were indulging themselves in an exorbitant perpetration of the most

elaborate Enormities, until they were overwhelmed by that terrible Inundation, and hurried away to an unsuspected Perdition.

**SODOM & GOMORRAH** (which in regard of the admirable Fertility of the circumjacent Country, and the pleasantness of their situation, are compared by the Holy Ghost to *the Garden of the Lord*, Gen. 13. 10.) were consumed to ashes by a shower of Fire from *Heaven*, for the unnatural wickedness of their profligate Inhabitants.

**DAVID** that Magnanimous King of *Israel* (seduced by the Beauty of *Bathsheba*) committed those complicated sins of Murder and Adultery, and thereby accended that wrathful indignation, which (without the interposition of an infinite Mercy) would have triumph'd in his final destruction.

**AMNON** for deflouring his Sister *Tamar*, was barbarously  
slaughter'd

slaughter'd by her Brother *Absalom*.  
And he again perished by an extra-  
ordinary Destiny, not only for his  
ambitious aspiring to the King-  
dom, but for his prohibited Con-  
gress with his Fathers Concu-  
bines.

*SOLOMON* (though he were  
the Favourite of the Almighty, and  
the Darling of Providence, and  
possessed such a wonderful propor-  
tion of Wisdom, that he was ne-  
ver equalled by any but our blessed  
Redeemer) yet (by his immoderate  
love of strange Women) he be-  
came so notorious a Fool, as to  
worship the Gods of the *Gentiles*,  
and acted such Idolatrous Abomi-  
nations, that some Divines have  
made it a question, whether he had  
ever the Grace to repent of his A-  
postacy.

*SARDANAPALUS* (the  
last *Assyrian* Monarch of the Race  
of *Ninus*) was such a Miracle of

Effeminacy, that he wholly neglected the Government of his Empire, to Revel in the company of Strumpets and Pandars, and (by consorting with those Execrable Creatures) he grew so shamefully degenerate, as to attire himself in Womens Garments, and Spin among his Paramours. But when *Arbaces* and *Belosus* (two of his Lieutenants) were informed of his infamous deportment, they commenced a Rebellion against him, and (defeating him in Battell) besieged him in his Metropolitan City of *Nineveh*. And when the unfortunate Monarch perceived that he had no means to escape from the hands of his Victorious Enemies, he conveyed his Eunuchs and Concubines, with all his magnificent Furniture, Jewels, and Treasures, unto a private Apartment of his Palace, and putting fire thereunto, both he and the I-

dols of his Luxury, perished amidst the flames.

*NERO* Emperour of *Rome* was such a prodigious Lecher, that he made it a common practise to Ravish Virgins, and Matrons of the most Eminent Quality. He killed the Consul *Atticus*, for the freer enjoyment of his amiable Wife, committed Incest with his Mother *Agrippina*, and afterwards inhumanely flew her, and ripped up her Womb to view the secret Chamber of his Conception; and (to compleat the Scene of his Tragedies) he put to death his School-Master *Seneca*, who was the most Excellent of all the Stoick Philosophers. But at last the Supreme Power became weary of his detestable Villanies, and gave him over to a deserved Fate, for (being proscribed by the Senate, and deserted by those counterfeit Friends that were only the followers of his pro-

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perity)

prosperity) he fled out of *Rome* to a Neighbouring Village, and there (to avoid the ignominy of a publick Execution) fell upon his own Sword, and desperately died.

I might expatiate upon this ample Subject, and indeed a large Volume would be too little to comprize those Examples that may be produced upon this occasion; but I shall mention no more at present, because I am unwilling to recede from that brevity which I have hitherto observed in the management of this discourse.

It was a Custom among the Ancient *Egyptians* (at their times of Festivity) to have brought into their presence the Anatomy of a dead body, that the horror of that gastly Spectacle might incite them to remember their approaching Mortality, and consequently confine them within the bounds of Sobriety. And would to God those

Prodigies

Prodigies of intemperance (who arrive to such a sublimity of voluptuousness, as though they were placed in this world (like the *Leviathan* in the Sea) only to take their pastime therein) would (in the excesses of their debauchery) so far imitate the Example of these moderate Ethnicks, as to represent to the eye of their understanding the Advent of that inevitable day wherein they shall be convinced (by a dreadful experience) of the deceiveableness of those disorderly enjoyments, which are now the endeared objects of their affections, and shall say they have no pleasure in them, Eccl. 12. 1. When the Glutton (that makes a God of his Belly, Phil. 3. 19.) and pampers his perishing carcase (which must suddenly become a Treat for Serpents, and Vermin) with variety of Exquisite Delicates) shall be condemned to undergo all the extremities



of an implacable hunger: When the Drunkard (who drowns his Soul in a deluge of Wine) will be tortured with so insufferable a drought, that he shall with tears of blood supplicate for the poor mercy of one drop of water, and it will not be granted him. When the lascivious person (instead of gazing upon the fictitious beauty of an Idolized Mistress, and sporting in the arms of his *Delilah*) shall have his sight blasted with the contagious Vision of deformed Specters, and be imbraced by devouring flames. These serious and never-unseasonable reflections might (by the adjuvation of the Divine Spirit) dispel those Clouds of Vanity that obscure the eyes of their Reason, and their Faith, and give them an amazing Prospect of those never-ceasing sorrows which (without repentance) will infallibly succeed their momentary Consolations,

solations, might nip the blossoms of their riotous delights, make their joys to droop, and their mirth to wither, and might so terrifie their bleeding Consciences, as to oblige them to exclaim in the words of the converted Jaylor, Acts 16. 30. *What must we do to be saved?* The want of Consideration is a principal cause that infinite Christians perpetrate such flagitious Immoralities, as if they were never to render an account of their actions, and sleep so supinely upon the flowry Bed of Pleasure, that they have not the least apprehension of their imminent danger, until they are alarm'd out of their Golden slumbers by the fearful storms of an unappeasable Vengeance, and awake in the everlasting burnings, Isa. 33. 14. We have a sad instance of the danger of Security in the Story of the Rich Glutton, Luke 16. who was for-  
ger

ger in the Chase of his Secular Divertisements, and so immersed in Sensuality, that he had no leisure to consult the spiritual welfare of his immortal Soul; and it is observable of that Miscreant, that he never so much as lifted up his eyes towards Heaven, until he was in torments, and beyond a possibility of Redemption.

IT is a received Maxim, that they which mis-spend the precious opportunities of *working out their Salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2. 12.* in the sordid entertainments of this world, are reserved for tortures in the world to come; that they who enjoy their Heaven here, must expect a Hell hereafter. The Road to Felicity is not planted with Roses and Jessamine, but incumbred with Thorns and Bryars. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way* (says our glorious Redeemer, *Mat. 7. 14.*) *which leadeth unto life,*  
and

*and few there be that find it. And S. Paul and Barnabas (in a Visitation-Sermon, Acts 14. 22.) plainly tell us, That we must (not through many pleasures, but) through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.*

'TIS true indeed, had Men retained his Primitive Integrity, and kept within the limits of his Obedience, he had been always feasted with diversity of agreeable delights, pure and unmingled pleasures would have been the inseparable Companions of his Innocence; and after he had expended innumerable years in an ecstatical Contemplation of the Power, the Wisdom, and Goodness of his Maker, so marvellously conspicuous in the formation of this visible Fa-  
brick, he should have been translated from an Earthly to a Coelestial Paradise. But since the perfection of the New Covenant, and  
the

the Restauration of Mankind to the possibilities of Grace and Mercy, Humility, Mortification, Self-denial, and all the austerities of an Evangelical Repentance, are become the indispensable Requisites to our Religion, and are those Stairs whereby we must ascend to the Abodes of Glory. And it is a monstrous and most unwarrantable presumption to think, that we shall be taken from the Puddle of our Swinish impurities, to participate of the joys of Angels, and those *seraphical* transportations which bea-  
*tifie the spirits of just men made perfect,* Heb. 12. 23. Alas! let us not deceive our selves; the Oracles of Scripture positively inform us, That *without holiness no man shall see the Lord,* Heb. 12. 14. That *no unclean thing, or whatsoever worketh abomination, shall enter in to the gates of the New Jerusalem,* Rev. 21. 27. That except we re-  
*pent.*

pent, we shall all likewise perish,  
 Luke 13. 5. That Flesh and Blood  
 cannot inherit the Kingdom of God,  
 1 Cor. 15. 50. That whoremongers,  
 &c. shall have their part in the Lake  
 which burneth with Fire and Brim-  
 stone, Rev. 21. 8. If ye live after  
 the flesh, ye shall die, says the Au-  
 thor to the Romans, Rom. 8. 13. By  
 which pathetic Expression he in-  
 fers, That if we make our Mem-  
 bers the Weapons of Unrighteous-  
 ness, and persist in an incontroll-  
 able impenitency, we shall not on-  
 ly sustain that temporal separation  
 of Soul and Body (which was oc-  
 casioned by the first transgression of  
 the Protoplast, and is common to  
 the Just as well as the wicked) but  
 an immortal death, a death whose  
 Jurisdiction extends beyond the  
 Confines of the Grave, and will be  
 attended by all those tremendous  
 horrors which are capable of ma-  
 king a Creature superlatively mi-  
 serable,

serable. And alas! can there be a more desperate Frenzy, than (for Pleasures which vanish in the very act of their enjoyment, and (like Thorns in the fire) give but a blaze, and immediately die) to incur interminable sufferings, and sorrows whose duration runs parallel with Eternity?

MIGHT not that man be justly impeached of a great deal of folly, who when he is running a Race for a Prize of unspeakable value (instead of pressing towards the Goal) starts out of the way to play with those Flies and Atomes that hover in the Sun-beams? And is not he incomparably more foolish, who (to comply with every trifling lust) disregards *the price of his high calling*, Phil. 3. 14. renounces his Claim to a perpetuity of Happiness, and rashly exposes himself to those Vials of Wrath, those endless and unutterable punishments  
which



which an Omnipotent Justice has ordained of old (Isa. 30. 33.) for refractory and incorrigible Offenders.

IF we inspect the Memorials of Profane Story, we shall find that several Heathens are deservedly celebrated for their contempt of Pleasures, and (by the sole assistance of Moral Reason) have arrived to admirable degrees of Chastity and Temperance.

ALEXANDER the Great was indued with such an extraordinary gift of Continence, that when he had discomfited the numerous Host of *Darius*, and taken his Queen a Prisoner (who was absolutely the fairest Lady of *Asia*) he was so far from offering any injury to her Person, that he commanded his Officers to treat her with all the Veneration which she could expect from the meanest of her own Servitors: Nor would he permit them to bring her

her into his presence, lest the Charms of that lovely Princess might inforce him (by some unlawful action) to sully the Lustre of his then unblemished Reputation.

*SCIPIO AFRICANUS* (at the Sack of *Carthage*) was presented by one of his Souldiers with a Maiden of unparallell'd Beauty: But when he understood the Nobility of her Extraction, and was informed, that (by the consent of her Parents) she had been Contracted to a certain *Spanish* Lord, he immediately sent for her betrothed Lover, and not only restored the Virgin to him without the least Violation of her Honour, but Endowed her with that Money which was brought him for her Ransom.

*CYRUS* King of *Persia* (as he was upon a march with his Army) being asked by *Artabanus* what he would please to have provided for his Supper, the Monarch reply'd,

A little bread, for I hope we shall meet with some River to afford us water for our drink.

**EPAMINONDAS**, that Illustrious Captain-General of the Thebans, lived after so frugal a manner, that when he was invited by an intimate Acquaintance to sup with him, and perceived the Table to be furnished with abundance of superfluous Viands, he presently departed from the House in displeasure, and told his Friend, That he thought he had been requested to sacrifice, and to live honestly together, and not to receive the affront of being entertained like a Glutton.

**MARCUS CATO** (who Conquer'd Spain, and obliged that haughty Nation to become Tributary to the Roman Empire) was so abstemious in his Diet, that he never drank any thing but pure water, fed sparingly upon coarse Beef,

Beef, and those kinds of Meat which were common, and might easily be procured; and (in times of Peace) he accounted it no diminution of his Consular Dignity to manure his Grounds with his own hands, follow the Plough himself, and to perform as much Drudgery as the most active and laborious of his menial Slaves.

O blessed God! what a reproach is it to the generality of Christians, that men who were *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel*, Eph. 2. 12. and strangers to Divine Revelation, should out-vie them even in many of those Vertues which are confessedly Essential to the very being of that Religion whereof they make so specious a profession? How may it astonish us to consider, that the bare affectation of Vain-glory, and a little Popular Estimation, could perswade meer Infidels to a sober and regulated Conversation,

versation, when all the promises of a future Heaven, and an invariable state of Felicity, are not sufficient to restrain these pretended Believers within the verge of moderation. But if *the men of Nineveh* (as Christ intimates, *Mat. 12: 41.*) shall rise up in judgment against the contumacious *Jews*, for their contempt of the glad tydings of Salvation, and will promote their Condemnation, much more shall the actions of these *Ethnicks* (at the Universal Resurrection) heighten the shame, and aggrandize the confusion of them, who (instead of *adorning*) scandalize the *Doctrine of the Gospel*, turn the *Grace of God* into lasciviousness, *Jude 4.* and glory in the customary commission of those bestial impurities, which a modest *Heathen* would blush to name.

AND now if a serious reflection upon what has been suggested

ed in the foregoing Meditation can have no power to convince the extravagant voluptuary of the danger and vanity of a dissolute course of life; if neither the exemplary punishments inflicted upon others for the same Crimes, nor the terrible Menaces of the Almighty pronounced against those *who are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 4. can be loud enough to rouse the Wretch out of the sleep of security, and stop him in his Head-strong Career to perdition. If he will needs invade Eternal Misery, take the Infernal Kingdom by violence, and madly prosecute his own Damnation; I shall enlarge no further, but conclude this last Section of my Discourse in that formidable sentence of the Holy Ghost, Rev. 22. 11. *He which is filthy, let him be filthy still*: That is to say, let him proceed in the irreclaimable pursuit

suit of his licentious abominations,  
*treasure up wrath against the day of*  
*wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. and repleat the  
measure of his iniquities. Let him  
trace his dearly-purchas'd Pleasures  
through all the wild Mazes of De-  
bauchery, and gratifie every Sense  
with an unconfined fruition of its  
beloved Object: *Let him* (in the  
phrase of the Epicure, *wis. 2.*)  
*enjoy the good things that are pre-*  
*sent, and let him speedily use the*  
*Creatures like as in youth: Let him*  
*fill himself with costly wine and*  
*Oyntments, and let no Flower of the*  
*Spring pass by him. Let him Crown*  
*himself with Rose-buds before they*  
*be withered, and leave tokens of his*  
*joyfulness in every place. But with-*  
*al let him remember, that a time*  
*will come (which may be the next*  
*hour for ought he knows) when*  
*the Scene of his Transitory Jolliti-*  
*es shall terminate in Everlasting*  
*Ejulations, and that for all these*  
*things*



things God will bring him into Judgment, Eccl. 11. 9.

## The Close.

**I** Have now (according to my promised Method in the Introduction to this Discourse) succinctly treated of the *Vanity of Honour, wealth and Pleasure*, and have endeavour'd (by Example, Reason and Scripture) to demonstrate the inability of these several particulars, in order to the affording us any genuine and Essential Beatitude. And seeing that whatsoever the World proposes to us as conducive to our Happiness, is not only transient and delusory, but destructive of our final welfare: Seeing Honour (though never so much overprized

prized (by the foolish admirers of titular Greatness) is but a puff of air; Riches are but dross, and Pleasures poyson; let us no longer dote upon these empty, these evanid Entertainments, but abstract our affections from visible trifles, and fix them upon those invisible Accommodations that flourish above; *For the things w<sup>h</sup>ich are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal,* 2 Cor. 4. 18.

*I F in this life only we have hope in Christ* (says the famous Apostle of the Gentiles, 1 Cor. 15. 19.) *we are of all men most miserable.* And indeed what is there in this Region of Mortality, which (upon a due examination) may entitle it self to the esteem of a considering Christian? Alas! there is nothing here but labour and sorrow, care and inquietude, vexation and discontentment, multitudes of temptations, and myriads of inevitable diseases;

diseases; and (to be short) mere Idea's of Joy, and substantial miseries. If this be our Paradise, where is our Prison? if we make this our Palace, what can be our Jail?

WE were Created for nobler purposes than to acquiesce in the enjoyment of sublunary objects: Our Souls are of so sublime a nature, and invested with such Angelical capacities, that there is not any thing below Heaven which can circumscribe their desires. In vain they strive (by all their solicitous agitations) to acquire solid tranquillity, until they arrive at the Harbour of Coelestial Blessedness, and find a Repose in the Bosom and Caresse's of the Deity. *The Beatifical sight of God* (saith a Venerable Father of the Ancient Church) *is the supreme glorification of Man;* and consequently, the absolute Consummation of his Felicity. Here we view the Divinity but  
*through*

through a glass darkly, 1 Cor. 13. 12.  
 Read him in the Book of his Crea-  
 tures, and the mysterious Chara-  
 cters of his Word and Sacraments:  
 But when the Curtains of the Em-  
 pyreal Tabernacle shall be opened,  
 and this corruptible will have put on  
 incorruption, 1 Cor. 15. 54. we shall  
 behold him face to face, see him as  
 he is, 1 John 3. 2. and employ E-  
 verlasting Ages in the immediate  
 Contemplation of his adorable  
 perfections. He will be a Mirror  
 to our eyes, Music to our ears, Ho-  
 ney to our taste, Balm to our smell,  
 Light to our understanding, Concen-  
 tration to our will, and shall be all in  
 all, Colos. 3. 11. to the unimagin-  
 able satisfaction of our corporal as  
 well as spiritual faculties. By ver-  
 tue of our communion with him,  
 we shall possess life without death,  
 health without sickness, liberty with-  
 out restraint, security without mole-  
 station, satiety without loathsomeness,

banquet without envy, riches without  
 loss, and pleasures without alloy.  
 Then our Faith will expire in Vi-  
 sion, our hope in Fruition, and our  
 love shall be clarified to an eternal  
 Charity. To conclude, Eye hath  
 not seen, Ear hath not heard, nei-  
 ther can the Heart of Man be able  
 to comprehend that Infinity of  
 bliss, which the great Father of  
 Mercies has prepared for them,  
 who resolutely perform their Chri-  
 stian Warfare, contemn the glit-  
 tering blandishments of the World,  
 mortifie the lusts of the Flesh, and  
 repel the Fiery Darts of the Devil.  
 And, with a Word, not only contend  
 against, but bravely overcome all  
 those Impediments which obstruct  
 their approaches to the Habitations  
 of Glory.

THE

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The Indispensable Duty  
of amendment of Life.

*Except ye repent ye shall likewise  
perish; Luke 13. 5.*

**T**HOUGH Vice were as truly  
amiable as she falsely ap-  
pears to her deluded Profelytes;  
were the Pleasures she pretends to  
afford us in her Fruition durable  
and substantial; yet did we but  
(with a mature deliberation) re-  
flect upon these unavoidable pro-  
cipices to which she desperately  
drives us; and consider that her  
ways (though strewed with Roses)  
lead to the Chambers of Death, and  
descend to the dismal Mansions of  
Destruction; that the cunning In-

chantress displays her Charms only to betray us, and (by her sly Insinuations) endeavours, to allure us to an inevitable perdition. I presume the most zealous of her admirers, (unless irrecoverably infatuated by her infernal Sorceries) would so far advert to their future preservation, and the eternal welfare of their precious and immortal Souls, as to detest the dangerous flatteries of that perfidious Courtizan, and would be induced rather to embrace Virtue in her meaneſt Garments, than that painted Strumpet in all her seeming Glories.

And it is an intefragable Verity, that did we but confine our depraved Affections within their preſcribed Limitations, and reſtore exiled Reason to her juſt Dominion over our revolted and uſurping paſſions, we ſhould immediately diſcern the unſpeakable difference between



Between *Vice* and *Virtue*, and find that the one merely pretends what the other essentially enjoys. For *Virtue* is embellished with so many exquisite perfections, and has such genuine beauties, such attractive qualities to command our Veneration, and proposes such extraordinary advantages, such glorious and invaluable remunerations to her constant Devotees, that it is to be admired how the generality of Mankind should be so brutishly senseless as to contemn her charming Excellencies, and should so ignobly condescend to the sway of their dissolute Appetites, as to doat upon the apparent deformities of her treacherous and inveterate Rival.

But alas, that implacable Enemy of our Souls, the *Devil*, (who incessantly endeavours our destruction) knows with what Engines to assault us, and with an indefatigable industry employs all his subtil-

ries to seduce us from (that principal concernment of our lives) *the making our calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. And indeed the active Fiend is but too often successful in his deadly Stratagems, and (by his powerful temptations) insensibly intices many a debauched wretch to his irretrievable confusion.

Now Religion (which consists not in the speculation, but in the real practise and exercise of Vertue) proclaims this truth to us, that *solid happiness* is so far from being acquired by the enjoyment of those imaginary pleasures which Vice presents to us, that they do but aggravate our misery, and will in the conclusion (if we persevere in the pursuit of them) reduce us to an extremity of wretchedness.

FOR the abuses of that prodigious Monster are so palpably conspicuous, her ways so extremely dishonourable to God, and so infinitely

initely detraitive and derogatory from his Glory, that the holy Scripture abounds with numerous denunciations of those dreadful Judgments, those horrid and insupportable punishments, which shall inevitably overwhelm those uncontrollable Rebels, who (in despite of God and Goodness) fearlessly persist in the perpetration of their impieties.

AND the adorable *Jesus*; (whose Exemplary Conversation (as an Illustrious President of perfect Piety) we are commanded to imitate, and whose admirable Comportment (during his residence here below) was so Divinely Innocent, that his greatest Enemies could not impeach him of the least deviation from the strictest Rules of Vertue) in the dispensation of his sacred Gospel, did declare to the World, that the grand design of his descension from Heaven, was

not to confirm, but to supplant the Empire of Sin, to rescue us from that deplorable servitude whereunto the *Devil* had fatally inflav'd us, and to exalt us (by Grace, Faith, and Repentance) to a condition capable of enjoying Beatitudes incomparably surpassing those Felicities which our first Parents forfeited in *Paradise*.

BUT before we can effectually entitle our selves to those sublime and glorious advantages, or (by the least right) fortifie our pretensions to those inexpressible Priviledges, which his infinitely meritorious Crucifixion so wonderfully purchas'd for us, we must disclaim the acquaintance of Vice, and not only rescind the amity between us, but we must commence an irreconcilable War against her; we must (with all the powers of our Souls) endeavour to dethrone the Usurpers from the dominion of our hearts,

hearts, and exert all our faculties in a strenuous opposition of her Invasions: For while we imbibe her pernicious Principles, and (by a licentious compliance with her exorbitant persuasions) acquiesce in a state of impenitency, we are but Vessels of Wrath, the designed Heirs of Hell, and liable to all the extremities of an irreverible destruction.

IT IS only true repentance (actuated by a lively and vigorous Faith in Christ) which can exempt us from the intolerable pressure of those dolorous punishments to which the violation of the Law has deservedly condemned us.

AND therefore (as the most weighty business of our lives, as a Command enjoyned us by such solemn and indispensable Obligations, and as a duty unspeakably conducive to the confirmation of our future happiness) how solicitous

tous ought we to be in the expeditious performance of this important action? lest (as a merited retribution of our contumacious Rebellion) the exterminating Sword of Divine Justice cut us off in the supine prolecutio of our affected iniquities, and we forever perish.

AND did we but seriously contemplate the frailty of our constitution, and remember that our crazy bodies (though never so flourishing and healthful to outward appearance) *have their foundation in the dust*, Job 4. 19. and must end in corruption, that the days of our Pilgrimage (by an immutable Decree of Providence) are allotted their inviolable limitations, and the short progression of our time (after the efflux of a few years) must determine in a blissful or a wretched Eternity. Did we but (with a due deliberation) ponder upon the inevitable necessity of our

our

our dissolution, and the infallible certainty of a Judgment to come, these awakening Reflections would alarm us (unless our hearts are impenetrably *hardned through the deceitfulness of sin*, Heb. 3. 13.) out of the Lethargy of our destructive transgressions, and induce us (by an immediate and impartial contrition) to give all diligence to compleat a Reconciliation between God and us; upon which (as the ground-work of our Salvation) we must superstruct the whole Fabrick of our Peace here, and our Everlasting Security hereafter.

FOR indeed how is it possible for that man to possess any solid tranquillity, whose daring impieties bid defiance to the King of Heaven, and ingage him in an avowed War against his Almighty Creator? How can he chuse but tremble, when he considers that there is but a step betwixt him and the Infernal



fernal Horrors; and that nothing  
 but the slender thread of a fading  
 life (which a thousand unexpected  
 chances may instantly cut in fun-  
 der) preserves him from falling in-  
 to unquenchable fire? What an al-  
 lay must it needs be to all his pre-  
 sent fictitious Consolations, to re-  
 flect upon the future terrors of the  
 Lord; 2 Cor. 5. 11. and those con-  
 sequent Storms of Vengeance, that  
 will be the dismal Catastrophe of  
 his obdurate and final impeniten-  
 cy? Good God! can there be a  
 more deplorable frenzy than for  
 men to neglect that great Salvation  
 propounded to them in the Gospel,  
 and venture on Eternal Ruine,  
 merely to enjoy the pleasures of sin  
 for a season, Heb. 11. 25. To spend  
 money (as the Evangelical Prophet  
 eloquently speaks it, Isa. 55. 2.)  
 for that which is not Bread; and not  
 forsake the Fountain of living wa-  
 ter, and hew them out Cisterns,  
 that cannot hold water.

broken Cisterns that can hold no water, Jet: 2. 13. Alas, Experience (as well as Scripture) abundantly testifies, that the most permanent terrestrial Entertainments are (like phantastick shadows) transitory and insubstantial, and the glory of them is as the Flower of the Field, which in the morning courts our eyes with the variety of its Native Beauties, but at the close of day declines its drooping head to the cold Earth, and for ever disappears. The purest Pleasures have their dregs of sorrow, and the most refined Felicities are (at the best) but gilded miseries, and are so far from being truly satisfactory, that they but torment us in their fruition. We must all submit to Fate, nor can the price of infinite Worlds suspend the approach of our inexorable destiny. All our riches, pomp, grandeur, and honour, will abandon us at the Frontiers of the Grave, and

(conclude)

we

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we shall descend (as naked as we came from the Womb) to the solitary Abodes of Darkness and Oblivion.

**A N D** what a prodigious folly, what an astonishing madness is it, to cement our affections to such ignoble and perishable Objects? to misemploy the Inestimable Treasure of our golden hours in the pursuit of those Vanities which (when acquired) augment but our vexation, and to disregard the proffered Beatitudes of Heaven, and the glories of a lasting Eternity.

O let the Contemplation of the Dignity and Immortality of our Souls, of the future compensation of Vertue, and punishment of Vice, create in us a generous disdain of these sublunary Trifles, and incite us to prosecute our Claim to those Celestial Accommodations, which (being infinitely proportionable to the vast extension of our capacious desires)

*AM*

desires will render us unalterably happy.

And (as a prevalent perswasive to the emendation of our lives) let us exhibit to our practical consideration (that Riddle of Angels) the stupendious mystery of our restoration. Let us meditate how the unconfined Deity, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot comprehend, was contained (by a miracle of Omnipotency) within the narrow limits of a Virgins Womb; how Eternity was circumscribed by Time; and how the invisible God *blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. became Man, and (by the more wonderful resignation of his Life) conquer'd Death, and led in triumph the vanquish'd Powers of the Grave, and not only reprieved us from the extended jaws of Hell, and the calamities of an insufferable damnation, but removed those Encumbrances which impeded our way to Happiness,

*but still to shed no more blood*

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*and opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers.*

AND shall we (after such inimitable declarations of kindness) continue in a State of Hostility with so incomparable a Benefactor? Shall we (by a repetition of our injurious provocations) *crucify afresh the Lord of Glory*, renew those Wounds which have already expended such Seas of Blood for our ablution, and (to the utmost of our power) supersede the grand design of our redemption? Shall we (with the luxurious Epicure) constitute our Paradise in a Wilderness of Thorns and Briers, and prefer the momentary enjoyment of gross and insipid pleasures before a perpetual fruition of those calcined felicities that expect us in the supernal habitations? Shall we give the Reins to our inordinate affections, and (by a stupid inconsideration of the advent of that doleful hour, when we must lyedown in our Beds of Dust, and

go the way of all the Earth, 1 Kings  
2. 2. live, as if we were exem-  
pted from the common condition  
of Mankind, had made a Cove-  
nant with Death and the Grave,  
and our frail Bodies were (as well  
as our Souls) indued with incorrup-  
tibility and everlastingness?

BUT give me leave to avert  
this truth, That though the pern-  
icious fascinations of Sin may for a  
while stifle the exclamations of our  
trembling Consciences, and lull us  
into a lethargick security, yet a time  
will come, when that mighty Sa-  
viour (whose inexpressible love,  
without the least merit in us, ob-  
liged him to descend from his  
Throne of Inaccessible Glories, and  
(in the Phrase of the Apostle, Phil.  
2. 7, 8.) to make himself of no ra-  
putation, and to become obedient un-  
to death, even the death of the Cross,  
out of a pure commiseration of our  
sad and most lamentable condition)  
will

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will severely revenge the contempt of his clemency, and (when it is too late for repentance) signalize his Justice in our deserved confusion.

LET us, O let us (by a frequent and passionate meditation) anticipate that day of terror and amazement, when an Irresistible Inundation of Fire will overflow the Universe, and demolish the admired beauties of this harmonious Fa-  
brick; when the material Heavens must melt into a Dissolution, and all their Starry Ornaments be for ever extinguished; when the fearful Voice of the Arch-Angel shall awaken them *that sleep in the Dust*, Dan. 12. 2. and we must all be conveyed from the Prison of the Grave to the tremendous tribunal of an impartial and omnipotent Judge, where every individual person shall receive a retribution *according to what he hath done in his body, whether it be good or evil*,



2 Cor. 5. 10. Where we must give an account (as our Lord signifies to the Pharisees, Mat. 12. 36.) for every idle word; and not only our Immoralities, but our Righteousness it self will sustain a severe scrutiny and strict examination.

T H E R E haughty Potentates (divested of all their Regalities) shall with the meanest slaves be reduced to an equal plea. The true Convert, and the penitential Believer, for their temporary obedience will then be rewarded with interminable felicities: All the Clouds of their troubles (like Vapours before the Morning-Sun) shall vanish away. All their sorrows conclude in an Ocean of inconceivable delights, and the very remembrance of their elapsed tribulations shall be swallowed up in the Depths of Unfathomable Blessedness.

But those incorrigible Offenders, those obstinate and remorseless transgressors,

gressors, (who contemned Religion, derided the esteemed extravagancies of her zealous Profelytes, and lived after so licentious a manner, as if the Notion of a Deity were but the Dream of Melancholy Church-Men, or a politick contrivement of State to controul the wild disorders of the Multitude, and restrain them in subjection to the superior Powers) shall be convinced, by a formidable demonstration, of the infallibility of that assertion of the Royal Prophet, Psal. 58. 11. *Verily there is a reward for the Righteous: Doubtless there is a God that judgeth the Earth; a God whose searching Eyes pryed into the most retired recesses of their Hearts, and by whose never-to-be-repealed sentence they shall be consigned to a perpetuity of torments.*

**WHAT** a Deluge of sorrow will then overwhelm the miserable Impenitent, when he shall perceive how (for the momentary gratification

tion of his swinish appetites, and the imperfect enjoyment of fugitive and miſ-called Pleaſures) he has forfeited his pretensions to Eſſential Happineſs, and (as a wretched Victim of the Divine Indignation) muſt languish in Floods of immaterial fire, and dwell with the everlaſting burnings, Iſa. 33. 14.

WHAT impetuous Storms of Deſperation will inceſſantly invade his guilty Conſcience, when (by a too late reflection upon the paſſed Intrigues of his debauched life) he ſhall conſider, how he has undergone greater anxieties in the purchaſe of Damnation, than would have entituled Him to the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, and inſtated him in the actual poſſeſſion of unmix'd and unlimited Joyſhine & bliſſitude.

TO OBEY THE Silver Cord be looſed, or the Golden Bowl be broken, or the Pitcher be broken at the

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*Mountain, or the wheel broken at the Cistern, Eccles. 12. 6.* In short, while there is a possibility of Salvation, and before the Gates of Mercy are eternally closed, let the serious apprehension of the approximation of that insupportable day, affright us from the commission of our enormous impieties, and induce us (by the voluntary austerities of an unfeigned repentance) so to establish our future welfare that we may escape *the wrath to come*, Mat. 3. 7. Let us (with a sincere humiliation) prostrate our selves before the Throne of Grace, and (by a penitential acknowledgment and dereliction of our Sins) implore the Supreme Majesty that he will vouchsafe to remit our Transgressions, and accept the invaluable Merits of our crucified Saviour as an all-sufficient Propitiation for our Offences; that he will be pleased to confirm us in our resolutions  
of

of Reformation, and to fortifie the Bulwarks of our Faith against the attempts (not only of our visible Enemies, but) of those more dreadful invisible Assailants, the *Principalities and Powers of Darkness*. And that (for the remaining part of our lives) we may so awe and restrain our reclaimed affections, that the enticements of Vice may be unable to withdraw us from that Indispensable obedience which (by the Primitive Law of Nature, and the more solemn Injunctions of Religion) we are commanded to pay him; but that the Exaltation of his Glory, and the Celebration of his ineffable Goodness, may be the principal design of all our actions.

AND while we sojourn in this place of Tears; this labyrinth of still-renewing miseries, let us elevate our thoughts above the contemptible vanities of the world,

and esteem all the Dignities and Honours, the Promotions, Eminent Employments, and Riches of this Life, but (as they truly are) superficial Appearances, fallacious Ideas, splendid troubles, pompous Gauderies, and but meer dross and dung in comparison of the sublimated Excellencies of Heaven, and those Nobler satisfactions which *are at Gods right hand for evermore*, Psal. 16. 12.

TO conclude, let us so rectifie our unruly passions, that they may comply with the sober Government of our Reason; let our Reason (in those mysteries which transcend our comprehension) subscribe to our Faith; and in a word, let us make it our practise so to live, that we may not fear to die; but when the appointed time shall come, wherein we must submit to the Imperial Law of Nature, and put off these perishable Tabernacles,  
our

our separated Souls may be translated to that Celestial Jerusalem, whose Streets (as S. John metaphorically describes them, Rev. 21. 18, 19.) are of pure gold, the Walls of Jasper, and the Foundations of all manner of precious stones: Where we shall not wear, but inhabit Diamonds, and dwell in Palaces of intire Pearl; Where (no transitory Crown, such as beautifies the Brows of Earthly Potentates, but) an incorruptible Diadem of Glory will be the compensation of our Victory over the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. Where our Faith and Obedience, our Patience and Humility, our Resignation and Self-denial, and the rest of those Evangelical Graces which ennobled our Conversation upon this Theatre of Mortality, shall be repeated (in the Audience of all the Beatified Spirits of Heaven) to our unspeakable Honour, and requited with immar-



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cessible remunerations: Where we shall (to perpetual Ages) triumph in an excess of happiness, and acquiesce in an unintermitted enjoyment of those Ecstasical Felicities, which (from all Eternity) have been reserved for them, who break off their sins by Repentance, *and work out their Salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2. 12.*

*Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be Honour, and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

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**FINIS.**



*A Catalogue of some B O O K S  
Printed for J. Magnes, and  
R. Bentley.*

*Esolo.*

**L**ord Bacon's Natural History in  
Ten Centuries : Whereunto  
is newly added, The History Natu-  
ral and Experimental of Life and  
Death, or of the Prolongation of  
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